

September 19, 2023

Donnie D. King
Chief Executive Officer
Tyson Foods
2200 W. Don Tyson Parkway
Springdale, AR 72762

Dear Mr. King:

I am alarmed by new reports that Tyson Foods has actively participated in dangerous and illegal child labor practices. According to a lengthy report published yesterday in the *New York Times*, the poultry processing industry has regularly contracted with companies that employ child workers and subjected those children to highly unsafe working conditions.¹ I am especially concerned that Tyson is subcontracting illicit child labor to avoid legal liability.

The *Times* report recounts a number of horrific instances in which children—many, if not most, of whom crossed the southern border as unaccompanied minors—were severely injured or even killed while illegally employed at chicken processing plants. The report opens with the story of a teenager whose arm was ripped down to the tendons after it got caught in a factory machine. It goes on to quote a federal inspector who had tried to “track down a teenager who she heard had fallen from a ladder at Tyson and broken his leg.” Other examples include an eighth grader from Guatemala who was killed two months ago while working the cleaning shift at a Mississippi plant.

Tyson has stated that the company has “no tolerance for child labor,” but the *Times* report suggests otherwise. According to the *Times*, every child interviewed by its reporter was fired—*after* “[s]upervisors who oversaw the cleaning shift at the Tyson plant warned their corporate office that a reporter was spending a lot of time in town.” One of the fired child workers said: “They made plenty of money from our labor and then tossed us out like trash.”

The *Times* suggests Tyson evades accountability for illegal child labor by relying on subcontractors. “Even when inspectors do catch child-labor violations,” the *Times* reported, “they usually fine only the subcontracted companies, not the brands themselves.” In short, “the brands that [have] benefitted from the children’s labor [have] faced no consequences.”

Any company that employs, facilitates, encourages, or excuses child labor must be held to account. In light of the facts, you owe the American people an explanation as to Tyson’s

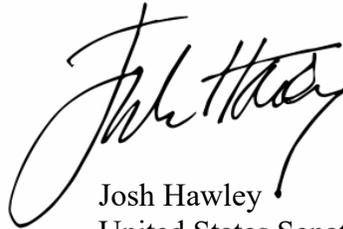
¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/18/magazine/child-labor-dangerous-jobs.html>

child-labor practices. Please provide me with answers to the following questions by the end of this week:

1. To your knowledge, how many instances of child labor violations have occurred at Tyson facilities in the past five years?
2. Is Tyson fully cooperating with the Department of Labor and any other state or federal authorities that may be investigating the company over potential violations of child labor law?
3. What internal controls are in place to ensure that Tyson does not employ underage workers, or subcontract with companies that employ underage workers?
4. In light of the *Times* report, what changes to company policy will Tyson be making?
5. How does Tyson currently handle complaints from its employees or employees of its subcontractors regarding child labor?
6. Will Tyson pledge to protect whistleblowers who raise concerns regarding child labor?
7. Will you commit to ending any contracts with companies that have been fined for illegally employing children?
8. Will you commit to an independent audit to ensure that Tyson's entire production chain is free of illegal child labor?

I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Hawley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Josh Hawley
United States Senator